

**Board of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC)**

**Joint Meeting of the Policy Focus Group  
And  
Rangelands Focus Group**

**Minutes  
January 10, 2007**

**Attending:**

**RMAC:**

**Representing**

Ken Zimmerman	California Cattlemen's Association
Mike Connor	Public Member
Clancy Dutra	California Farm Bureau Federation
Neil McDougald	California Cattlemen's Association
Chuck Pritchard	California Assoc. of Resource Conservation Districts
Jeff Stephens	CDF / RMAC Executive Secretary

**Members of the Public:**

Tacy Curry	California Assoc. of Resource Conservation Districts
James Bartolome	University Of California

**Items 1, & 2, Call to Order, Introductions, Review of the December 5, 2006 Minutes:**

Ken Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM. Jeff Stephens recorded corrections for the minutes as noted by RMAC members. Minutes were approved with corrections by unanimous vote.

**Item 3, Policy Focus Group - Discussion of the concept paper, "Integrating Natural Resource Management in California with Resource Conservation Investments."**

Ken Zimmerman Stated that he and Mel Thompson collaborated on revisions to the current version of the paper. He also stated that additional input was due from Pete Holloran and Joe Morris; however, responses from these individuals had not been received or arrived too late for incorporation.

Jeff Stephens asked if he may ask a few questions and make some recommendations. He asked for clarification on some wording such as use of the word "volatile" to describe bond appropriations. Ken Zimmerman clarified that his intent is to describe the inconsistent nature of bond funds in terms of availability and amounts that are funded.

Clancy Dutra directed attention to two examples of DFG lands under cooperative management. One is the Prather (sp) Ranch and the other is the Belcher (sp) Ranch. One is rented out for grazing with the money circulated back into management of the property for funding projects. The other does not have this arrangement pointing out the

inconsistencies on how DFG lands are managed. Clancy Dutra stated that he would look into providing more information about these operations.

Ken Zimmerman cited another example where the property is co-owned by a private landowner and DFG, and suggested input from the private individual would be useful for understanding the merits of a co-owned type of management.

Ken Zimmerman recommended that RMAC should develop a set of questions to ask these operations, one being is there a management plan on the property. Neil McDougald suggested that the structure of the question is important. There are many parcels owned by DFG that are not grazed and not leased to any outside party which are idle and/or in poor condition. There are other lands that are leased with contractual requirements that require practices similar to what a private person would do on their own land. A distinction needs to be made between these two types. Mr. McDougald emphasized that an important point to be made in the paper is that there is a substantial benefit to the State if there is a lessee on the property with responsibility for maintenance of that property.

Ken Zimmerman raised the question of whether it is best to return revenue back to the property or to the general fund. Clancy Dutra noted in the two examples he cited previously that it works best in the property where funds are returned directly for management of the property. Neil McDougald argued that funds returned directly to the manager leads to situations of unaccountability on the part of the manager and believes it is government's responsibility to manage these funds. Chuck Pritchard noted that the other side of the argument is that money reverting back to the general fund is often diverted leaving properties without funds for management. Mike Connor and Neil McDougald agreed that the Yolo Bypass model is a good one because a disinterested third party (RCD) is managing the money.

Neil McDougald stated that RMAC should highlight the good examples of where management is working and make recommendations to the Board. This should include stating why they are successful.

Mike Connor stated that asking if a property has a management plan should be made carefully since the plan may be old, obsolete, or never implemented and thus does not reflect the true worth of having a plan.

Ken Zimmerman stated that one area of the paper that he needs assistance is discussion of the Weed Management Area (WMA) process and making the link to the subject of this paper. This comment was based on comment from Mel Thompson questioning the relationship of the WMA text to the subject of the paper. Ken Zimmerman explained that the reason for including the WMA information is that development of a plan for work and dollars similar to what occurred in the WMA example will be needed in order to obtain support from the legislature. Clancy Dutra recommended that a few brief statements are needed leading into the WMA discussion explaining the connection between the WMA process and successful implementation of a resource management strategic plan.

Neil McDougald pointed out that RMAC has been involved in development of the Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program (IHRMP) and the Water Quality Management Plan. These are highly successful efforts that should be presented as examples of how to work cooperatively along with the WMA example. Jeff Stephens encouraged this approach and suggested opening this particular section of the paper with some lead in statements

indicating that successful partnerships between government and private sectors can take numerous forms followed by the WMA, IHRMP, and Water Quality Management Program examples. Add to this input from Tacy Curry, the Yolo Bypass example, and Joe Morris. This would constitute a powerful message.

Ken Zimmerman asked the question of whether the paper along with the letter that Neil McDougald will write is going to other partners before going to the Board of Forestry in order to have a broader perspective. These other partners (TNC for example) may not understand the WMA process and therefore an explanation of WMA is needed. Mike Connor and Neil McDougald recommended going with the same language in the current version but add the other examples keeping the descriptions short and to the point. Mike Connor recommended descriptions shorter than the WMA description.

Jeff Stephens volunteered to provide a draft rewrite of the section dealing with examples of successful partnerships. Ken Zimmerman will use the rewrite from which to make future edits. Jeff Stephens will circulate the rewrite to all RMAC members prior to the March meeting.

Jeff Stephens was instructed by the Chairman to contact Jay Chamberlin with the Resources Agency and ask for a write-up on the status of the Working Lands Stewardship Advisory Council. Jeff Stephens agreed to make contact. Tacy Curry stated that the Council has not moved forward; however, Ken Zimmerman stated that the Council regardless of status is pertinent to the paper.

Ken Zimmerman recapped the tasks identified so far as:

Identifying the properties that RMAC is familiar with under government management. Once this is done then the following questions may be asked of those properties.

1. Is there a management plan?
2. Is there a private manager- cooperator involved with the property?
3. Are revenues returned to the general fund or are they returned to the property?

Clancy Dutra suggested that continued review of other information that supports the paper should occur while it is out for review as a means of providing further support for the effort. He recommended that these materials not actually become part of the paper. Chuck Pritchard noted that he would be willing to ask Assemblyman Sam Blakeslee to review the paper and provide support.

Ken Zimmerman stated that by the March meeting he would like to have the letter by Neil McDougald prepared and the paper in a form ready for circulation by the end of March.

Tacy Curry asked if RMAC would like to have a map of the properties that are owned by agencies in the State. Ken Zimmerman asked that Tacy Curry provide the maps. She volunteered to provide a legislative overlay as well and a copy of the Yolo Bypass Management Plan.

Ken Zimmerman asked Jeff Stephens to provide the web links for the papers Increase Efficiency in Using Existing Bond Funds for Environmental Enhancement (RES-35) and Water, Parks and Wildlife Bond Implementation (INF-28) to RMAC. Jeff Stephens agreed.

Discussion of the Policy Group concluded.

#### **Item 4, Rangeland Focus Group**

Mike Connor assumed control of the meeting and began with a review of the December 5, 2006 minutes. Corrections were noted by Jeff Stephens. Minutes were adopted by unanimous vote.

Mike Connor introduced James Bartolome to RMAC and asked him to provide an update of the Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program (IHRMP) and the Certified Range Management Program certification process. James Bartolome began with the IHRMP.

Dr. Bartolome identified the various positions he holds with the University including Professor of Range Management and Director of IHRMP. He also is the Secretary on the Certification Panel for Society of Range Management (SRM) Pacific Section.

The IHRMP does an annual program review which he distributed. The program is a statewide special project. He also distributed the Strategic Plan for the IHRMP identifying the mission and three primary objectives. The mission is to promote understanding and stewardship of California's woodlands through research, education, and collaboration. The goals are to:

1. Promote healthy and sustainable woodland ecosystems
2. Provide leadership and promote policies to foster oak woodland conservation
3. Maintain hardwood rangelands as a working landscape with sustainable economies

Dr. Bartolome emphasized the need for better monitoring as a key component of goal 1.

Dr. Bartolome noted that one problem that exists in the state is with staffing. They presently have a very good cadre of extension and advisory specialists in the state but the research and faculty support has lagged and needs improvement. This places the burden of doing research on extension people.

Dr. Bartolome identified key clientele of the IHRMP as being City and County planners, ranchers and livestock operators, public land managers, teachers and educators. A key issue for the program now is to fill positions and maintain services to clientele.

Ken Zimmerman asked that Dr. Bartolome define what he means by monitoring given that the word has multiple meanings. He responded stating that monitoring can be divided into compliance and effectiveness monitoring and referred to the Sonoma County Grazing Handbook as an excellent document dealing with monitoring. He further stated that "we" intend to provide a "toolbox" for end users from which to select and meet their monitoring objectives, rather than to prescribe a particular type of monitoring that should be done. He is also interested in developing cost effective tools that do the job versus very expensive alternatives. He views providing access to user groups as an area of future concentration.

Chuck Pritchard asked on the status of staffing and funding needs. Dr. Bartolome responded stating that they have adequate funding and positions; however, finding adequate replacements is a problem due to potential retirements. Dr. Bartolome referred to appendix B of the Strategic Plan for a list of staff and explained the current organization.

Mike Connor mentioned the public scoping session on hardwoods that RMAC completed over one and half years ago and that city and county planners were determined to be a major group that could impact oak woodland management. James Bartolome stated that the program has shifted more to planners rather than landowners and ranchers. Service to landowners and ranchers has been highly successful, but now there is a new need to reach planners and developers. The question is whether this will be as successful as working with ranchers and landowners. IHRMP has put on two workshops for planners and developers that were well received and there are plans to do two more.

Chuck Pritchard noted that cities have been doing a good job with tree ordinances. It is the unincorporated areas where conflict remains, and that when a violation of county ordinances occurs there is reluctance for prosecution of the offense.

Tacy Curry asked if the workshops are being used to formulate input for county general plans. James Bartolome responded that he believes they are being used for this purpose. Mike Connor stated that he attended a workshop in Riverside and the idea behind it was to use the workshop information to develop general plan information on oak woodlands. Tacy Curry stated that the planners she works with deal with oak woodlands on a parcel by parcel basis rather than the overall impact of development on oak woodlands. She also stated that with the Williamson Act protecting the class I Ag ground more pressure is being placed on oak woodlands for development. James Bartolome noted that there are a couple of UC publications that do address the issue of developmental pressures.

Mike Connor asked how well known is the IHRMP to planners and developers. Dr. Bartolome responded saying that a survey was conducted and the IHRMP scored relatively high for awareness as compared to other statewide programs.

Discussion then turned to the Certified Range Management Program. Mike Connor asked that James Bartolome provide a history on the CRM program and how the Certification Panel came to have its current responsibilities with CRM applications.

James Bartolome distributed a brochure which gave an overview of the program. He stated that it is important to note that the professional foresters licensing law preceded the Forest Practices Act by 1 year. Therefore, the requirement for a RPF to conduct professional forester services on forested landscapes precedes the requirement for a timber harvest plan. In 1987 a task force looking at the law requiring an RPF found that the law was written very broadly and applied to landscapes and situations not expected, impacting wildlife biologists, arborists, etc. In 1990 a State attorney General opinion ruled that forests and wild lands are synonyms, which Dr. Bartolome expressed as being a false conclusion. This decision essentially meant that range management on forested landscapes was forestry and required RPF supervision. In 1991 the SRM appointed a panel for certification and that panel developed the criteria for being a CRM. The program was adopted by the California section. Legislation occurred later that allow other professions to become certified as specialty programs under the Foresters Licensing law. Most of the groups impacted eventually dropped out of this process but the Range Society remained. Range Managers felt that it was a matter of survival to practice range management and that the public deserved some measure of assurance that qualified people were licensed to practice range management. In 1995 the first CRMs were certified and there are currently 75-80 CRMs.

Chuck Pritchard asked if an individual must be a CRM in order to advertise as a professional rangeland manager. James Bartolome responded no. In order to call yourself a Certified Range Manager in the state you must be certified with the Board. But law requiring a CRM does not apply to federal lands or someone working on their own property. Any person practicing on state land or private land that meets the definition of a forested landscape must be a CRM.

James Bartolome then defined the term “forested landscape.” The legal interpretation requires a tree canopy of 10% or greater. Therefore if you are working on grasslands or chaparral a license is not required. The definition of a forested landscape has been problematic in that considerable debate exists as to what qualifies. The most recent case before the Professional Foresters Examining Committee (PFEC) resulted in a split decision with neither side having a majority. To address the problem the PFEC is formulating policy on the role of RPFs and other professionals on hardwood rangelands. They hope to finalize the document at the next meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

Chuck Pritchard asked how other professional societies such as real estate appraisers tie into the certified program. James Bartolome stated that other professional organizations may apply to have their certification process recognized by the state if they so choose. Persons then could become certified to practice their craft on forested landscapes just as CRMs are. Currently range managers are the only group whose certified program has been approved by the state for practicing on forested landscapes. He also clarified that only the SRM Pacific Section Certification Program is recognized by California. A written exam is required.

Mike Connor verified that the PFEC meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> will be to clarify the role of other certified professionals on forested landscapes.

Mike Connor directed the discussion to the CRM process for individuals and asked James Bartolome to explain how it occurs. He explained that the basic requirements are a degree in range management or minimum course requirements. The experience requirement is 5 years. An application with 3 letters of reference is required. The applications are reviewed by a certification panel (6 people public and private) that is appointed by the SRM Pacific Section Board of Directors. The Board makes the final appointment as a CRM.

Fees are collected every other year. Recently the PFEC has agreed to pay for the licensing process and administration of testing using licensing fee funding.

The certification panel meets twice a year. The exam is given in October and April. There is substantial lead time required in order to collect all the required material. There have been delays with applications because of the way meetings are scheduled and the fact that the panel must meet to discuss every applicant's qualifications and test results. There have been delays in administering exams as well. It averages 4-6 months to get exams graded and back to the applicant. The certification panel will be holding an extra meeting this year to address changes in procedures designed to facilitate and improve the examination process. These recommendations will be presented to the SRM Board of Directors at the next SRM National meeting in Reno.

Ken Zimmerman raised the issue of Continuing Education Units (CEU). James Bartolome volunteered to brief the RMAC on the issue. Two of the biggest problems facing the certification process are education and experience requirements. Cal Poly now has a

minor in range management. They chose to provide a minor in Range and meet the educational requirements for a CRM. A problem arises for some individuals, for example a person with a degree in Animal Science who has extensive experience, but lacks the course work in range management. This leaves the certification committee with the problem of determining if the experience is equivalent to university level courses in range. This has created a need for CEU courses that make up the deficiencies. Mel George has proposed an on line course in range management that has been endorsed by many educational institutions including UC and Cal Poly. He invited RMAC's support to address the CEU problem.

James Bartolome stated that the requirements for certification do not absolutely require CEUs but he believes that it will be a requirement in the future. Mike Connor asked how documentation of CEU may be accomplished. James Bartolome stated that there are two ways: 1) a centralized accounting office or 2) self reporting. The National SRM office is self reporting.

Ken Zimmerman brought the discussion back to a subject that RMAC has been dealing with in previous discussion; that being the value of being a CRM and whether the program has any real teeth in regards to protecting the public who depend on certification to ensure quality of service. James Bartolome responded by stating that the certification program provides several benefits: one, a plan prepared by certified professional provides value to the plan. It does not guarantee a good plan but increases the likelihood; Second, the SRM guidelines requires that a certified individual to abide by a code of ethics and actions may be taken by the Society or the PFEC when violations occur; third, the mere act of licensing requires an interaction of professionals that works for the betterment of the profession.

Chuck Pritchard made the point that there is a need for incorporating the knowledge and skills of individuals with extensive skill in managing ranches and livestock that is presently not taken into account by the present certification process. He believes there are CRMs who lack basic ranch management skills found with others that actively manage ranch property. He cited a program in Texas whereby a person may be certified in ranch management by virtue of experience and education.

Mike Connor asked that the group wrap up the discussion. The following points were made by various members of RMAC and others attending:

Clancy Dutra stated that he believes many of the people who apply for the CRM test do not understand the time involved for the process start to finish. He suggested a letter to the applicants which explains the timelines would be helpful for avoiding unnecessary delays. James Bartolome stated this is a good idea and one easily implemented. He also stated that they will be working towards updating their website.

Ken Zimmerman recommended that CEU could be encouraged by offering a financial incentive through reduced licensing fees.

James Bartolome stated he will carry forward RMAC's comments to the Certification Panel and the results of that comment back to RMAC.

#### **Item 5, New and Unfinished Business:**

None

**Item 6, Public Comment:**

None Adjourn